

Let's All Get Behind The Movement To Build A Direct Road From El Paso To Columbus

# The Columbus Courier

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## The Heroes of the Atmosphere

The First Aero Squadron at U. S. Army Base. Some Exciting Experiences.

BY JEAN CABELL O'NEILL

It is not possible to complete the series of articles showing the brilliant work of the army at Columbus, New Mexico which the Courier has presented for the past month without a tribute to the First Aero Squadron, for heroic in a large measure is the work of this picturesque branch of the U. S. Signal Corps.

The growth of the aviation field has been open to the eyes of all, and needs no exploitation. Eighty days ago there was a mosquito covered irregular field to the southeast of town, where now butterfly-like snowy tents gleam under the brilliant sun, and in the sand storms shelter costly their valuable "birds" from damage of wind or weather.

Many machines of various makes, from different parts of the country now are awaiting the word "to a way" where they are most needed. Much money is tied up in these aeroplanes, but the wars of Europe have proven that these aeroplanes—the eyes of the army—are the most vital, except radio telegraph of all the methods by which modern victories are won. So none doubt that the money invested is money well expended when good flying machines are the articles purchased.

Details of the work at the field are so well known to our citizens and the flights so keenly watched by the entire population that is out of bed when they are made, that it is hardly worth while to speak of what is commonly known. There is no branch of army work so intensely interesting to Columbus people as what goes on in the "aviary." Even a fruit vendor could not sell me a cantelone yesterday without retelling a good deal of misinformation as to airships and their fliers.

Stopping to buy films, I met today an officer—not of the aero squadron, however—who said he was about "to take a bunch of girls to put them in an aeroplane for a snapshot." I took my courage in both hands, and told him better not; that the machines were not toys or playthings, but part of a serious equipment of a serious part of the "preparedness plan."

The men of the aero squadron are so careful not to mention a thing about their work, and the officers keep a seal on their tongues, but every outsider who sees a machine in the air seems

to feel qualified to tell of every detail and hope and fear in connection with the "aviation situation," as the papers call it.

Therefore the Courier will content itself with telling something of the achievements of some of the officers of the corps—a corps which is a brave and hard working set of heroic Americans, so modest that their achievements are little known.

Captain B. D. Foulis is in command of aviation at this the most important station of aeronautical work—and much of the success in the overcoming of difficulties caused by various conditions, particularly altitude and heat, is the result of his enterprise, and his grasp of the needs of the service. A service that during this expedition is still somewhat in the experimental stage, for all the experience in aviation at sea level is of little use when the atmospheric conditions of desert and high altitude are encountered.

Among the most picturesque figures of the Aero Squadron are Lieut. E. S. Gorrell and Lieut. Dargue, for they early in April last broke the record for cross-country and non-stop flying with one passenger, wresting the record for this work from the notable Stephen MacGordon, a Curtis aviator of New York. The highest altitude reached on this memorable flight was 7,300 feet above the peaks of the Sierra de Las Encinas, which is really about 11,300 feet above sea level. A greater altitude could have been attained, but that the hands of the pilot became almost useless from cold.

Five days later Lieut. Dargue was again the hero of an adventure, but not a happy one, for, with Capt. R. H. Willis, of South Carolina, as observer, to avoid possible destruction of the aero plane he was driving through a mountain pass, he tried to rise, but the engine lacked the "pep" necessary to respond to the suggestion of the pilot, so the fliers were smashed on to a ledge of rock, falling a considerable distance with the machine, which was destroyed, and the aviators were badly bruised. They had a terrible experience in a two-days' tramp before they reached help, and Capt. Willis was in hospital and Lieut. Dargue on sick leave also for a long time after their harrowing experience.

Lieut. Gorrell has had enough adventures to furnish many a reel "movie thriller" in the suffering and narrow escapes from death in which he has been chief actor since the expedition into Mexico began.

Captain T. F. Dodd is also a brilliant flier, and has succeeded

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## Commercial Hotel Will Soon be Finished

Several Substantial Buildings Under Course of Construction. Town Begins to Look More Like a City.

The New Commercial Hotel is being rapidly molded into form, and will soon be ready for occupancy if the weather man permits. A large number of workmen are being kept on the job, and the brickwork and also the carpentry work is being done. This building will be modern in every respect, and will have its own water system, a well for the purpose of supplying water having been drilled.

Sam Ravel, the owner, was the greatest loser in the raid, but he has not been discouraged at all, and is very enthusiastic in regard to the future of Columbus. He has always been ready and willing to assist in any enterprise that was for the benefit of the community, and the fact that he is giving Columbus such a building as the New Commercial will be proof his faith in the Lower Minbras.

The Evans Garage is another building that is nearing completion, and is far better than the average building that has been constructed in Columbus since the Villa visit. Several other buildings have been erected, and are now being built, and that part of the town is growing very rapidly.

A visit to Taft Street in the early part of the evening sure reminds one of being in a city. This street is thronged with the crowds every night until late, and all the available space has been bought or leased. In some instances vacant lots are renting for as high as \$50 per month.

### Chautauqua Closed Thursday

The series of entertainments given here by the Western Chautauqua System closed Thursday evening with one of the best shows ever seen in Columbus. The Parsons sisters, violinists, and Miss Mary Owsley, vocal soloist, with the other members of the Vivian Newkirk Harmony Company, are sure some entertainers, and those who were present on this last entertainment certainly enjoyed the treat.

Every show was good, and it is regretted that there was not a larger number of citizens and soldiers take advantage of them. The visit of this Chautauqua system was not a financial success, the guarantors having to put up about \$200. Everyone who attended were well pleased, and hope that we may be able to induce the company to return next year.

## A Boston Breakfast On the Border

Happy Men from "The Hub" Enjoy Baked Beans, Brown Bread and Brains.

One of the much enjoyed and unique events of this week was a "Boston Breakfast," in honor of the newspaper men who have come to Columbus, N. M., with the 2nd Mass. Infantry of the National Guards.

"Dad" telephoned to Deming for the brown bread "like mother back in Boston used to make" and it was worth the forty miles truck train trip to be so much enjoyed.

Newspaper Row at Columbus has been enriched by the addition of Theodore Hedlund, of the Boston Post; Willard H. Davis of the Boston American; Frank P. Sibley, of the Boston Globe; and Samuel F. Moore, of the Springfield Union. With Jack Harding, of the International News Service; Captain James L. Walsh, Chief Ordnance officer at this base; Captain G. F. Bailey, of the 2nd Cavalry, now master of Truck Train No. 2, all having lived in Boston at some delectable period of their young lives, they foregathered for a "feast of reason and a flow of soul," with trimmings of codfish tails and beans.

"Tis whispered that the codfish tails were a la can and the beans a Mexican variety, but the atmosphere of cultured fun was all it should have been, and the unfortunate outsiders, who hail from little old New York, were all corners with envy and resentment to the stork that failed to deposit them in Boston on their first appearance in this vale of tears.

### Must Go Deeper For Water.

The well on the land of A. L. Taylor, which has been leased by the government did not furnish the necessary amount of water and must be sunk deeper. It had been drilled to a depth of 218 feet and it was thought that an ample supply of water had been encountered. The drilling was stopped and a test was made, but it did not furnish the necessary amount, and the driller, E. J. Fulton, is now going deeper.

It seems that preparations are being made for the troops to remain here indefinitely. They have taken a lease on this property, which adjoins the townsite on the north-west, and have already erected a 12,000 gallon tank on a thirty foot tower, and have made arrangements with Mr. Fulton for the drilling of three more wells. According to our best information the camp grounds being prepared on this section is not for the troops now stationed here, but for others that are yet to come.

This will make an ideal camp for the soldiers, it is higher than the old camp, and is well drained in the rainy season. The soil is such that it will not become muddy, being more or less of a sandy loam, and the dust will not become the nuisance it has in the camp south of the track. Plenty of drill ground can be had, and bringing into consideration the delightful climate taken the year round, an ideal post is the result.

Every Friday night "stunts" will be "pulled off" at the "Y," the men of various regiments taking part in an informal programme.

## Court Proceedings

The following cases were heard in Justice of the Peace Peache's court this week: R. E. Pringle, F. A. Hall, Jake Ballard, W. T. Ritchie, J. D. Phillips, Bert Alexander, J. J. McLaughlin, Earl Herron and Joe Grady were charged with selling beer without a license. Herron and Grady were bound over to await the action of the grand jury in the sum of \$1,000. Pringle and Hall were given an opportunity to make a \$1,500 bond or await the action of the October grand jury in the Deming jail. J. D. Phillips, Bert Alexander and J. J. McLaughlin were bound over in \$2,000 bond. Jake Ballard and W. T. Ritchie were acquitted.

J. E. Lorton and Chas. R. Finnigan were charged with disorderly conduct and were fined \$5 each and costs. Joe Grady and W. M. Eldridge were each assessed a fine of \$10 for gambling. F. L. Brown, Robert Gentle, W. S. Brown and Harry Lloyd were given 60 days in the county jail for vagrancy, but were given an opportunity to get out of town. Moseley was required to contribute \$25 and cost on a similar charge. Russell Tribby was charged with the theft of an army pistol and for carrying same concealed. He was fined \$50 and given 90 days in the county jail.

Sheriff Simpson was down Monday and proceeded to make a general clean up among those who persist in violating the laws, and as a result of his visit several cases were brought before Judge Peach. D. J. Coadborne, deputy sheriff, and Jack Thomas, chief of police, are on the job almost day and night, and those who do step over the bounds of the law are generally picked up and prosecuted. Considering the number of people here the criminal docket has been very light, possibly lighter than any town you can find with the like number of people, and the larger part of the criminals are charged with selling whiskey.

### Dentists Visit Columbus.

Dr. Arthur E. Smith, of the Medical and Dental Department of the Chicago University, who has been giving a series of lectures in Albuquerque; Dr. Moran, of Deming; Dr. R. H. Godger, of Silver City, and Dr. E. M. Brady, formerly of Columbus, came down here Sunday for a short visit. They were over for dinner with the Officers of the New Mexico National Guard, returning to Deming by auto late in the evening.

### Long Dry Spell Broken

The weather man finally gave in, and several good showers of rain fell first of the week, the first rain since May 1st. The grass was beginning to get very dry, and some of the range stock was suffering, some of the cattle men reporting heavy losses. From now on for two or three months plenty of rain can be expected, and all know that it always brings plenty of good grass.

The codfish lays a million eggs. While the helpful hen lays one. But the codfish does not cackle. To inform us what she's done. And so we scorn the codfish coy. But the thoughtful hen we prize, Which indicates to thoughtful minds,

It pays to advertise.

J. H. Bell, Superintendent of Labor will speak on the "Friendship of Christ" at the Y. M. C. A. Sunday night next.

## Should Have an El Paso-Columbus Road

Would Shorten Distance Between Two Towns 50 Miles or More and Affect a Great Saving.

The need of a direct highway from El Paso to Columbus is growing more apparent every day, in fact those who have made the trip in auto during the past two or three months could have more than saved enough in gasoline and wear and tear on their machines to have built such a road. The Government trucks which have been brought from El Paso to the base at Columbus could have been sent over the proposed route at a saving possibly equal to the cost of the road.

During the past three or four years the troops have been on the border, the route along the boundary line has been traveled extensively, and in ordinary times the trip can be made in near half the time that it can be made by going around by Deming. On account of some sand a few miles west of El Paso it is not a feasible way to route automobiles unless some work is done. With a small amount of work this route could be put in first class shape.

By keeping the Borderland for about ten miles west of El Paso and then turning south-west to the road which has been traveled by the troops, about 50 miles distance would be saved.

Douglas has been trying for some time to get a change made in the Borderland route, keeping the road true to its name, and the matter is being taken up with the Chamber of Commerce of Douglas, and also El Paso and is being brought to the attention of the army officials. It would not be necessary to make a change in the Borderland but build the road and give tourists and anyone who wish to make the trip the opportunity of traveling either road.

### Fire Protection for Columbus

A representative of a chemical fire engine manufacturing company has been in town during this week, and has sold the citizens two chemical fire engines. The board of trustees did not think they had money enough to take up the proposition, and the money has been raised by popular subscription. The machines purchased, it is claimed by the manufacturers, have a fire fighting charge that is equal to 9,000 pails of water, and can be quickly reloaded at small expense.

It would seem that in this climate that a fire engine of this design would better meet the requirements of Columbus than a machine that must depend entirely on the water supply. The new water works will be completed soon, and while the pressure will not be as strong as should be the fire insurance without doubt will be lowered enough to pay the expense of the water system and also the fire engines within a very short time.

### Bridge Contract Signed

Chas. Heath, senior member of the Luna County Road Board, this week signed the contracts with the El Paso Bridge Co. for the construction of the steel bridge across the arroyo in the gap. The material for this bridge site, and the work will be completed by September 1st, or sooner. With the completion of this bridge a first class highway will be opened between Columbus and the county seat.

The graders have been busy on this road for over one month, but on account of the dry weather no roads have been thrown open for traffic. Now that the rains have set it will be an easy matter to pack the dirt and make the highway ready for use.

## Reliability Is What Counts

For more than six years Sam Ravel has done business in Columbus. His reputation for fair dealing has stood the test of time. He has handled good goods and always sold them at reasonable prices. His friends and customers have stayed through all these years. Only standard goods are carried. You cannot do better than trade with him.

**SAM RAVEL**

**COLUMBUS, New Mexico**